

# Diabetes Information

Keep this card with your driver's license or vehicle registration, so that it is available to police and other first responders in case of emergency.

## THERE ARE THREE MAIN TYPES OF DIABETES

The body does not make its own insulin. Formerly called "juvenile diabetes," type 1 diabetes can occur at any age. It requires daily insulin given by needle injections or an insulin pump. The lack of insulin can lead to severe illness and death.

## GESTATIONAL

During pregnancy, some women have high blood glucose. Treatment requires an eating plan and scheduled physical activity. It may require insulin injections.

DIABETES IS SERIOUS AND HAS NO CURE.

1  
TYPE

2  
TYPE

The body does not use its own insulin well and/or makes too little insulin.

This condition requires an eating plan, physical activity, oral medications, and sometimes insulin injections or other types of injections or an insulin pump. If insulin is needed in medication form, the lack of insulin can lead to severe illness.

## EVIDENCE OF DIABETES

If a person is unable to communicate, look for:

Medical alert tags at neck or wrist

Wallet medical alert cards

Diabetes devices and supplies such as blood glucose meters and strips, finger-stick lancing devices, insulin vials, syringes and medication pens, an insulin pump, and continuous glucose monitor (includes a sensor inserted just under the skin).

# Diabetes Emergencies

**SEVERE HYPOGLYCEMIA** (very low blood sugar, insulin reaction, diabetic reaction): This condition can be caused by too much insulin or certain diabetes pills, alone, or with too little or delayed food, physical activity, alcohol, drugs, over-the-counter medication, or any of these combined.

## ► Signs of Severe Hypoglycemia

Many of the signs and symptoms of a low blood sugar emergency overlap with the signs and symptoms of intoxication. They can include rapid onset of:

- Shakiness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Sweating, chills, and clamminess
- Mood swings: irritability, anger, bad temper, combativeness
- Confusion
- Rapid/fast heartbeat
- Light-headedness or dizziness
- Color draining from the skin
- Sleepiness
- Blurred/impaired vision
- Lack of coordination, clumsiness
- Bizarre behavior
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

## ► If Severe Hypoglycemia Is Suspected

Give sugar (such as ½ can full-sugar soda, ½ cup regular fruit juice, or 3–4 glucose tablets) if all three conditions are present:

- The person is known to have diabetes.
- The person's mental status is altered.
- The person can swallow.

*Warning: Do not give food or drink to a person who cannot swallow. Immediately seek medical attention.*



**SEVERE HYPERGLYCEMIA** (very high blood sugar, diabetic coma): This condition may be caused by not enough or a lack of insulin, illness, dehydration, a heart attack or stroke, or other medical problem.

## ► Signs of Severe Hyperglycemia

The following signs and symptoms of very high blood sugar may require first aid. They can be gradual in onset:

- Drowsiness, sleepiness
- Confusion
- Extreme thirst
- Very frequent urination
- Flushed skin
- Fruity breath odor (may be mistaken for alcohol)
- Heavy breathing
- Vomiting
- Eventual unconsciousness

## ► If Severe Hyperglycemia Is Suspected

If the person is responsive, permit him or her to test blood glucose, drink water, have immediate access to a bathroom, and administer insulin. Ask if medical attention is needed. *Warning: If the person is unresponsive, immediately seek medical attention.*

KEEP CARD WITH WALLET OR IDENTIFICATION



MEDICAL ALERT



### Very Low Blood Sugar

- ▶ **I have diabetes.** At times I may experience life-threatening severe hypoglycemia (very low blood glucose, very low blood sugar).
- ▶ **Signs, which can be mistaken for drug or alcohol intoxication, may include** staggering and poor coordination, changes in personality (irritable, angry, combative), slurred speech, poor concentration, bizarre behavior and confusion, sudden hunger, excessive sweating, and unconsciousness and seizures.
- ▶ **To treat it, see other side.**

### Very High Blood Sugar

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- ▶ **Signs, which can be mistaken for drug or alcohol intoxication, may include** drowsiness, confusion, extreme thirst, very frequent urination, flushed skin, blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, and a fruity breath odor (may be mistaken for alcohol).
- ▶ **To treat it,** I may need to test my blood glucose, drink water, have immediate access to a bathroom, and take my insulin. If left untreated, severe hyperglycemia can lead to coma and death.

fold 1

fold 2



EXTRA CARD

- To treat low blood sugar, I need to eat or drink something containing sugar, such as:
  - ▶ ½ can full-sugar soda
  - ▶ ½ cup regular fruit juice
  - ▶ 3-4 glucose tablets
- Stay with me as I rest, and continue to test my blood sugar level until I recover.
- If I am unconscious, never force me to swallow. *Seek medical attention immediately.*

### Emergency Treatment of Low Blood Sugar

I have:  Type 1  Type 2  Gestational Diabetes

I take the following diabetes medications:

Insulin: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

After stabilizing me, please call my emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

My diabetes health care provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

### Medical and Contact Information

**My Name:** \_\_\_\_\_



MEDICAL ALERT

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MEDICAL ALERT



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### Very High Blood Sugar

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### Very Low Blood Sugar

**My Name:** \_\_\_\_\_



MEDICAL ALERT

KEEP CARD WITH WALLET OR IDENTIFICATION

fold 2

fold 1

